

ABSTRACT

The present invention contemplates a system for rapidly isolating nucleic acids. The system comprises an insoluble silica matrix and a buffered aqueous salt solution containing salt at a concentration of at least 3 molar and a buffering agent at a concentration sufficient to provide a buffering capacity corresponding to that which either tris(hydroxymethyl)aminomethane or phosphate ion at a concentration of 0.1 to 1 molar would provide in the solution. Methods of using the system are also contemplated.